



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

AFGHANISTAN

COUNTRY PROFILE

June 2010



The Government has approved the National Action Plan for Women and the Law on the Elimination of Violence Against Women. (Photo: USAID/Afghanistan)

USAID'S IMPACT AT A GLANCE

- Infant mortality rate has dropped by 33 percent
- Approximately 64 percent of the population now has access to some form of healthcare
- More than 60 percent of the judiciary has been trained through USAID-sponsored programs
- More than 70,000 loans have been extended to women-owned businesses
- Five mobile phone companies together have more than 13 million subscribers

OVERVIEW

Twenty-five years of war have devastated the economy, institutions, and people of Afghanistan. The U.S. Government, NATO, and international partners have combined forces to support the Afghan Government in a civilian-military effort to secure and rebuild the country and combat terrorism.



so USAID works as a partner to the joint Afghan-U.S. Government counterinsurgency strategy to implement programs that improve lives throughout the country.

USAID, as part of the U.S. Government effort, is supporting the Afghan Government to provide services and security for its citizens. President Barack Obama's Afghanistan-Pakistan strategy and the "Afghan First" initiative call to empower Afghan institutions to lead in development and reconstruction. Long-term development thrives best in stable conditions and

PROGRAMS

GOVERNING JUSTLY AND DEMOCRATICALLY

USAID supports legitimate Afghan governance through programs that boost confidence in the law, expand government capacity, extend municipal services, target corruption, support credible elections, and strengthen civil society and independent media.

Despite a difficult 2009 Afghan Presidential election, approximately 5.7 million people voted. In 2010, key Afghan democracy and governance events occurred such as a national peace jirga and the Kabul Conference, and the first Afghan-led parliamentary elections, scheduled in the fall.

Key USAID goals met in democracy and governance include the training of 3,000 civil servants in core administrative skills; Presidential Elections; renewed support to the Afghan High Office of Oversight; and, enhanced assistance to a more independent Parliament that now includes mentors for each parliamentary committee.

USAID has also supported a network of 10 Civil Society Support Centers nationwide that has built the capacity of 393 NGO staff to train other Afghan NGOs, provided skills instruction to 247 Afghan civil society organizations (CSOs), disbursed a total of 151 grants to CSOs (worth \$10 million), and produced 212 radio and TV programs. USAID has also continued to expand the availability of independent sources of information through support for Salaam Watandar, a national network of 42 community radio stations.

INVESTING IN PEOPLE: HEALTH AND EDUCATION

Under the Taliban, 900,000 boys and no girls were enrolled in schools. Today, nearly seven million children are in primary school, two million of them supported by USAID. More than a third are girls. USAID has trained 50,000

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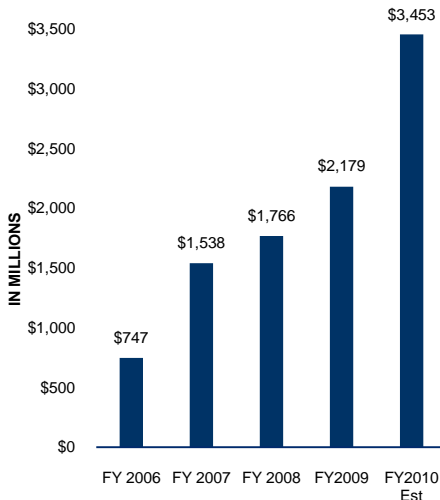


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COUNTRY PROFILE CONTINUED

USAID ASSISTANCE TO AFGHANISTAN



Funding Sources: Child Survival and Health, Development Assistance, Economic Support Funds, Global HIV/AIDS Initiative, and PL 480 Title II Food Aid

For more information, see the
FY2011 Congressional Budget Justification
<http://www.usaid.gov/policy/budget/>

educators and printed 76.5 million textbooks. In areas with no government schools, USAID has set up 3,695 classes serving 52,504 students, 65 percent of them girls. To strengthen higher education institutions, USAID sponsors Afghan professors for master's degree programs and short-term study abroad programs and raises the quality of university-level instruction by training professors in modern teaching. USAID's support to technical and vocational education is better preparing Afghan youth and adults.

Afghan health remains seriously at risk. One of every six Afghan children dies before age five. With USAID and other donors' support, most Afghans now live within one hour travel to a health facility. USAID support of midwife training has increased midwives' numbers from 468 to 2,700 in eight years. Finally, Afghanistan, one of only four countries in the world where polio is endemic, has seen 90 percent of children under age five vaccinated since 2002, partly due to USAID.

ECONOMIC GROWTH

Afghanistan's economy has steadily improved, growing at approximately 12 percent per year during the past six years. Afghanistan also receives direct assistance from the U.S. to increase revenue collection, improve the legal and regulatory framework to increase private sector investment, and build the government's skills to manage the economy.

Reliable infrastructure and energy networks are critical for economic growth. Viable, secure roads are paving the way to bring farmers' crops to market, providing access to health and education, and facilitating regional trade. USAID's and other donors' rehabilitation of 7,700 kilometers of roads is increasing mobility and strengthening trade and security. Approximately 80 percent of Afghans live within 50 kilometers of the new Ring Road.

Access to reliable, affordable power is key to sustaining a private sector. The U.S. and other donors increased power to two billion kilowatt hours through 2009 and aim to double power again by 2014. USAID has built the Kabul Power Plant, providing backup power to 600,000 Afghans in Kabul and northern areas, and is expanding energy infrastructure to provide power to populations in the south. USAID also helped negotiate agreements with Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan to import affordable power.

Revitalizing Afghanistan's rural economy is a key to its long-term economic growth. USAID works with farmers to decrease the country's poppy production. In addition, better water access for farmers has enriched irrigation for 15 percent of arable land and improved the health of millions of livestock. Afghan farmers also have expanded access to improved technologies and financial services.

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